



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

NEWS

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RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES OUTLINED FOR WILD HORSE ISLAND STATE PARK AND OTHER FLATHEAD LAKE ISLANDS

Fish, Wildlife & Parks recently adopted an updated management plan for Wild Horse Island State Park and three nearby islands.

The plan, which updates the 1994 Wild Horse Island management plan, will guide recreation opportunities and resource conservation at the state park and on Cedar, Bird and O'Neil islands over the next 10 years.

While many of the same practices will continue at Wild Horse Island State Park, the plan emphasizes the need for monitoring use to conserve resources and maintain recreational experiences. For instance, FWP will develop standards for special-use activities and conduct cultural and historic-building inventories at all four FWP islands.

Cedar, Bird and O'Neil islands were originally purchased to protect Canada goose nesting habitat, which is no longer a high priority due to the good health and stability of today's goose populations. Nevertheless, FWP proposes to continue conserving waterfowl habitat on the islands, while also actively managing public recreation, including human-waste management and primitive camping.

Dave Landstrom, FWP Region One parks manager, said the agency recognizes the high recreational value of the three smaller islands. "These islands are jewels, offering incredible camping experiences for motorized and non-motorized boaters," he said. "The islands are special places on Flathead Lake and the updated plan ensures that we'll have a solid conservation and management program for each one."

Landstrom noted the plan offers long-term guidance for Wild Horse Island to protect the parks' natural resources and associated public recreational activities, including hiking, picnicking, photography and wildlife watching.

The final plan and decision notice can be viewed on the FWP Web site at fwp.mt.gov under State Parks. Copies are also available by visiting the FWP Kalispell office at 490 North Meridian Road or by calling 406-752-5501.

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